

## Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

INFO OCT-01 AGRE-00 USIA-06 AID-05 EB-08 ABF-01 COME-00

ISO-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 AF-08 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12

NEA-10 L-03 /081 W

-----270506Z 057482 /15

R 261707Z JAN 77

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2396

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FODAG

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: FAO

SUBJECT: GENEVA GROUP DIALOGUE WITH FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL ON  
DEVELOPMENT OF FAO BUDGET FOR 1978-1979

REF: ROME 19036, NOVEMBER 21, 1976

1. U.S. AND U.K. CO-CHAIRMEN OF GENEVA GROUP IN ROME MET WITH  
FAO DIRECTOR-GENERAL SAOUMA AFTERNOON OF JANUARY 25 TO DISCUSS  
HOW TO PROCEED WITH THE CONTINUING DIALOGUE HE HAD INDICATED HE  
WAS WILLING TO ENTER INTO EARLY IN 1977 WITH THE GENEVA GROUP ON  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FAO BUDGET FOR 1978-1979. AFTER SOME  
DISCUSSION, SAOUMA AGREED TO BRIEF THE WHOLE OF THE GENEVA GROUP  
AFTER HE RETURNS FROM A MIDDLE EAST TRIP, IN MID-FEBRUARY. IN  
THE INTERIM, HE IS AUTHORIZING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR  
BUDGET AND PROGRAMMING EDWARD WEST TO DISCUSS WITH THE GENEVA  
GROUP THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF INFLATION AND DOLLAR-LIRA EXCHANGE  
RATE, AS FULLY AS WEST WAS PREPARED TO DO SO AT THIS TIME.

2. SAOUMA AT FIRST DEMURRED SOMEWHAT, SAYING THAT IT WOULD NOT BE  
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PROPER FOR HIM TO ACCEPT INSTRUCTION FROM ANY GOVERNMENT OR  
GROUP OF GOVERNMENTS. HE SAID THE GENEVA GROUP DISCUSSIONS WITH  
HIM EARLIER HAD LARGELY SERVED THEIR PURPOSE. HE HAD TAKEN THE  
GENEVA GROUP VIEWS SERIOUSLY, AND AS A RESULT HAD EXERTED HIMSELF  
FURTHER TO MAKE CUTS IN BUDGET PROPOSALS.

3. THE GENEVA GROUP CO-CHAIRMEN REMINDED HIM THAT THEY HAD

NEVER ASKED FOR ANY EXCLUSIVE ROLE FOR THE GENEVA GROUP COUNTRIES, AND SAID THEY DID NOT HAVE IN MIND ANY NEGOTIATIONS ON THE BUDGET. THEY WISHED IN THE DIALOGUE TO OBTAIN PERIODICALLY HIS CURRENT THINKING AND PLANNING SO AS TO AVOID SURPRISED THAT COULD LEAD TO DEBATE AND CONFRONTATIONS WITH FAO AND AMONG MEMBER COUNTRIES.

4. SAOUMA STATED SOME OF HIS CURRENT IDEAS. HE IS MAKING A DETAILED PROGRAM BY PROGRAM AND DIVISION BY DIVISION REVIEW TO TRY TO CUT OUT ANY PERCEIVABLE WASTE. ANY INCREASE IN THE FIELD ACTIVITIES IS TO BE DIRECTED TO THE COUNTRY LEVEL, BUT IT IS NOT PRACTICABLE TO THINK OF REAL CUTS IN THE REGIONAL OFFICES, SINCE THIS WOULD AROUSE PROTESTS FROM THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. HE FORESEES INCREASE IN REAL TERMS FAR LESS THAN IN THE RECENT UNESCO AND WHO BUDGET ACTIONS. REAL INCREASES WILL BE AT A LEVEL OF ABOUT 7 PERCENT. THERE WILL BE A MODEST INCREASE IN THE TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAM. FOR THE ROME HEADQUARTERS, LARGELY SALARIES, HE FORESEES A DECREASE.

5. THE TIMING OF SAOUMA'S BRIEFING OF THE ENTIRE GENEVA GROUP IS TENTATIVE BECAUSE OF HIS UNCERTAIN TRAVEL PLANS. HE IS NOW VISITING PARIS, BONN, AND BERLIN, AND AFTER SPENDING THE FIRST THREE DAYS OF NEXT WEEK HERE IN ROME, HE WILL SPEND FEBRUARY 3-10 IN LEBANON. VISITS TO EGYPT AND THE SUDAN HAVE ALSO BEEN PLANNED, BUT THE TIMING IS NOT NOW CLEAR. HE COULD NOT MEET JANUARY DATES PROPOSED BY EGYPT, AND EGYPT HAS NOT PRESENTED NEW DATES. IN MARCH, AS REPORTED SEPARATELY HE HAS PLANS TO VISIT LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES. WE ARE TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH HIS OFFICE

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AND SCHEDULE HIS BRIEFING AS SOON AS HIS MIDDLE EASTERN TRAVELS ARE COMPLETED, PROBABLY MID-FEBRUARY.

6. THESE PLANS FOR DIALOGUE ON THE BUDGET ARE TO BE DISCUSSED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE GENEVA GROUP IN ROME, TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 3. BEAUDRY

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**TAGS:** EAID, EAGR, US, FAO  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009